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Why A Summit Now Seems A Dubious Proposition

Since meetings at the summit are difficult to set up, arouse great expectations and will not be treated casually as informal mutual explorations of mind by rival leaders, the talks now being suddenly arranged between Kennedy and Khrushchov seem to us of dubious value and dangerous potential. How can Mr. Kennedy successfully survey the problems of the planet with Mr. Khrushchov when it becomes clearer every day that the President still lacks an adequate map of the world? How and what can we negotiate when we really don't know where we're going? In this respect, Mr. Kennedy's letter to *Newsday* was most revealing, and what it revealed—we regret to say—was close to puerility. The letter was intended at last to answer questions as to just what the President means by his vague calls, often repeated, for sacrifice. We have suspected for some time that this was little more than a subconscious desire on a young man's part to sound glamorously like Churchill making with blood, sweat and tears. Sure enough, when challenged to be specific, the best that Mr. Kennedy and his White House staff can do is an anti-climactic message jumbling together higher highway taxes for trucks, defenses of "our image abroad" (why can't we send this verbiage back to Madison Avenue?) and higher postal rates! This was ludicrous but another part of the letter was worse. It harped again on the need for self-censorship of the press—the only conclusion Mr. Kennedy has yet drawn publicly from the Cuban fiasco. What this boils down to in practice, given the nature of bureaucracy, as every reporter knows, is "when we make mistakes, don't print them."

The Strongest Nation on Earth—the Most Nervous

The reply to *Newsday* was feeble because the reality came through. The sacrifice line was overblown rhetoric. Mr. Kennedy is not Churchill and the USA of 1961 is not the Britain of 1940. We are the most powerful, though also the most nervous, nation on earth. What we suffer from is not an unwillingness to fight but an unwillingness to think. If there are still hesitations about the wisdom of plunging into jungle wars in Southeast Asia and trying to dash up San Juan Hill again with the shade of Teddy Roosevelt, this is not disturbing. On the contrary, it is reassuring. It shows there is still a little sense left. What we need are not sacrifices in paying higher taxes to bloat further an overextended and unmanagable military machine. The sacrifices we need to make lie in the realm of new ideas. We need to sacrifice old clichés about free enterprise at home and communism abroad, and we need more men willing to risk their respectability by saying so out loud. One of them is that we cannot utilize our full capacity for good in the world and at home while we allow a handful of great corporations to plan our economy so they can still make a profit while running it at three quarter or half capacity. The real lesson of the price fixing scandals has yet to be drawn. They show that we live in a planned, not a free economy, but we leave its planning to irresponsible corporate commissars opposed to full employment. Another idea which needs to be sacrificed is that colonial revolt turns left because of a conspiracy which can be shut off at the spigot in Moscow; that underdeveloped countries can raise their living standards without socialist measures and need only wait until some benevolent Western capitalist comes along to build factories for them. Indeed fear of the word "socialism"—and of the word "planning"—is a crippling national neurosis. Here is where thought, leadership and sacrifice must begin if our country is to rise to the obligations toward the rest of humanity which our blessings entail upon us.

You Just Can't Beat Our Laotians

"At one point a reporter asked a Laotian delegate how much of the country was still controlled by government forces. 'All of it,' the delegate replied promptly, 'We control all of the provinces. And if it weren't for outside interference from the Viet Minh, we would control even more'."

—Crosby Noyes from Geneva, Wash. Star May 15.

Ruled by a Mindless Machine

If Mr. Kennedy's program grows every day more strikingly like that of his predecessor, until one could almost believe this is Mr. Eisenhower himself after a rejuvenation operation, the fault does not lie in *our* unwillingness to sacrifice. It lies in Mr. Kennedy's. He is unwilling to sacrifice his friendly ties with the Southern Democrats, and to risk his popularity with the country, by embarking on a program which measures up to our needs at home and abroad. Overburdened with ceremonial duties, Mr. Kennedy is more and more the creature of a stale governmental bureaucracy conditioned to the cold war, and ready when in doubt to reach for a gun. As the powers of state are more and more centralized in the President, until its mammoth burdens grow beyond any one man's grasp, the decisions are made more and more by an anonymous army of bureaucrats, civilian and military. Czar Nicholas I once said, "I do not rule Russia. Ten thousand clerks rule Russia." Mr. Kennedy may sometimes feel tempted to say the same. This too needs airing if we are to stop lurching from one supposed crisis to another. The machine, particularly its military component, is becoming so huge that it runs itself. Our fate is at the mercy of its sheer momentum.

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Concluding Last Week's "When the Brass Hats Begin to Study Mao Tse-tung, Beware!"

Guerrilla War — The Dazzling New Military Toothpaste for Social Decay

In reading the military literature on guerrilla warfare now so fashionable at the Pentagon,* one feels that these writers are like men watching a dance from outside through heavy plate glass windows. They see the motions but they can't hear the music. They put the mechanical gestures down on paper with pedantic fidelity. But what rarely comes through to them are the injured racial feelings, the misery, the rankling slights, the hatred, the devotion, the inspiration and the desperation. So they do not really understand what leads men to abandon wife, children, home, career and friends; to take to the bush and live gun in hand like a hunted animal; to challenge overwhelming military odds rather than acquiesce any longer in humiliation, injustice or poverty. These military theoreticians, astounded by the success that such handfuls of men can achieve under a Castro or a Ho Chi-minh against huge and well-equipped armies, think their tactics can be duplicated mechanically, in reverse, like a drill, if only their recruits can be taught to go through the same motions.

If They Failed in Cuba, Can They Win in Vietnam?

The armed services are oriented to battle on the field of public relations, where higher appropriations are won. They have to deal with a gimmick-minded public, which is used to mechanical devices and looks for some new pushbutton solution whenever confronted by a new problem. So the dazzling latest military toothpaste for social decay is this idea of our using guerrilla methods, too. Nobody notices that the chief theoreticians on our side are a group of French colonels who not only failed to win by these methods in Algeria but have had to be scattered and suppressed by the French government because they began turning their "dirty tricks" against the French Republic. Nor does anyone stop to consider that these tactics and the men who would be in charge of them have just had an easy opportunity in nearby Cuba, and failed dismally. The same Joint Chiefs of Staff which lacked the competence to stage an invasion of Cuba, and the same intelligence agents who could not correctly evaluate the mood of the Cuban people—can they be expected to do better, let us say, in faraway North Vietnam? Against an older regime, right on the border of Communist China?

It is time we realized that the brutal surgery of military and para-military methods cannot cure complex social and economic problems. The CIA got rid of a popular reformer, Mossadegh, in Iran, but the makeshift corrupt regime with which he was replaced is now collapsing. Guatemala, where the CIA got rid of Arbenz, is ripe for new trouble. These counter conspiracies only postpone crises which burst forth again with redoubled force. If the hundreds of millions we have squandered in Laos and South Vietnam had gone into public improvements during the past decade, both countries would be models of stability. As it is, the only stable country in the area is Cambodia, where the CIA tried to overthrow Prince Sihanouk because of his neutralism and failed.

It is said, and some of the liberals around the President seem to believe it, that these methods can be combined with economic and social reform. But experience is against them. We never succeeded in getting Chiang or Syngman Rhee to make reforms; our support merely strengthened their heavy hand. Can we do better with Diem in South Vietnam? One of the tasks of counter guerrilla forces will be to eliminate suspected subversive influences in the villages. Can this be done without eliminating the very men who want reform and leaving the dull and acquiescent? Military methods of this kind weaken the reform elements at the bottom of the pyramid, or drive them into the arms of the Communists, and at the same time strengthen the rulers and ruling classes who are the principal enemy of reform. This new course is a dead-end street. If followed, it not only will fail to spread democracy abroad but will poison it at home.

***This is based on a reading of the special double issue (Feb.-Mar. 1957) of the Revue Militaire d'Information which ACSI (Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence) has been circulating in translation at the Pentagon. This issue was edited by Col. Lacheroy, right hand man to Gen. Salan in the coup which brought de Gaulle to power in 1958, and reflects the thinking of the French Colonels influenced by Mao Tse-tung whom we discussed in last week's issue.**

What Our Latin Neighbors Fear

"Many Nicaraguans were unhappy Wednesday with the news that the U.S. is giving 74 scholarships to their military officials at the new guerrilla warfare training base in the Panama Canal Zone. They point out that Panama gets only 36 scholarships; Honduras, 32; Venezuela, 28; Ecuador, 25; and Bolivia and Costa Rica, 11 each. They ask why the smallest country [Nicaragua] gets the most trained officers and 'will they be used to kill patriots and keep the Somozas in power'?"

—Geo. Southworth, Latin American editor, the Miami Herald, April 20, from Managua, Nicaragua.

London Times Man Sees U.S. Unable to Understand Communist Guerrillas Not Just Thugs

"Notably absent in . . . official appreciation of areas of contest like Cuba, Laos and South Vietnam, is any reference to the ideological nature of the contest. There would appear to be a national inability to comprehend that sincere men can believe in communism. . . .

"This curious block in the national thinking appears so far to have precluded study of the Malayan experience: the social and political components of the strategy, the explicit offer of reform and independence, and the struggle, as Field Marshal Templer said, for the hearts and minds of the people. Persuaded that communist infiltrators can only be Moscow-hired thugs, the inevitable reaction is to answer with thuggery. . .

"Your Correspondent met in Malaya and Vietnam communists who fought a guerrilla war against Japan for four years, and then returned to the jungle, patiently to train, indoctrinate and identify themselves with peasants of the same colour, race and tongue. Britain had to muster a large army, evolve a huge intelligence organization, and change the political structure of the country to defeat these men who led only a few thousand."

—The Times (London) April 26 from Washington.

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"The Idea of National Interest Must Not Be Used . . . To Smother Public Debate"

181 U. S. Historians in Open Letter to President Ask Hands Off Cuba

The press (except for a brief mention in the New York Times May 14) has ignored an extraordinary letter on Cuba sent the President by 181 historians at 41 colleges and universities. We believe their public manifesto reflects a revival of conscience and courage on American campuses. We print the text and the signers below, believing that for a publication with as high a percentage of readers as ours among intellectuals and on campuses the names, too, are news and deserve to be reported.—IFS

"We the undersigned historians, members of 41 university and college faculties, wish to express our serious concern at your Administration's apparent attempt to fabricate national unanimity in support of a Cuban policy whose future outlines remain obscure.

"The ill-starred intervention in Cuba is ended. It should not be resumed, openly or covertly. At worst, it could bring the world closer to general war. In any case, it would weaken the position of the U.S. in countries determined to pursue their own development, free of great-power control.

"You began your administration on a note of promise. The U.S. was to seek a meeting of minds, to prevent the test of arms. In less than a hundred days, in dealing with Cuba, our government has in effect fallen back on the old cliché: 'The only thing they understand is force.' To resort to force is to preclude understanding and to undermine confidence in this country's good faith.

"Shortly after the use of force in Cuba, you called for self-censorship of the press in the national interest. Were it not for truthful reporting in the press, the American people would not realize the dimensions of our failure in Cuba. Truthful reporting did not create the fiasco in Cuba, nor can the mobilization of political unanimity redeem it. The national interest, especially at this critical juncture, can only be found in open debate. The idea of national interest must not be used as a slogan to smother public debate.

"Further intervention in Cuba and a facade of national unity at home are equally dangerous. We urge you to lead America on a path of peace through negotiation and constructive social action."

—Open Letter to President Kennedy signed by 181 historians in 41 U.S. universities and colleges, May 10.

The 181 With the Courage to Try and Mold (As Well as Teach) History

Univ. of Cal. (Berkeley): Werner T. Angress, Thomas G. Barnes, Delmer M. Brown, Walter F. Cannon, Richard Drinnon, Richard Herr, James F. King, Thomas S. Kuhn, Joseph R. Levenson, Bryce Lyon, Martin E. Malia, Henry F. May, Robert C. Padden, Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, Carl E. Schorske, James R. Scobie, Wm. G. Sinnigan, Henry Nash Smith, Clark C. Spence, Kenneth M. Stampp, George W. Stocking, R. A. Webster.

Univ. of Cal. (Los Angeles): Eugene N. Anderson, Keith B. Berwick, Robert N. Burr, John W. Caughey, J. S. Galbraith, Harold M. Hyman, Jere C. King, Donald B. Meyer, Doyce B. Nunis, Theodore Saloutis.

Univ. of Cal. (Riverside): M. L. Rappe, T. H. Van Laue.

Stanford: Claude A. Buss, Frederic L. Cheyette, Gavin T. Langmuir, James T. C. Liu, Anatole G. Mazour, Thomas C. Smith, Gordon Wright.

Reed College: R. F. Arragon, Amin Banani, K. Dundharker, Richard H. Jones, Marvin Levich, Lauro R. Martines, David Tyack, Owen Ulph.

San Jose State College: Chas. Burdick, Peter M. Buzanski, Irma E. Eichhorn, Gladus Gilmore, Edgar A. Hornig, Walter Hugins, Michael Kay, David I. Kulstein, Lawrence B. Lee, Jackson T. Main, H. B. Melendy, H. Wayne Morgan, Robert B. Roberts, Donald E. Walters, Gerald E. Wheeler.

Univ. of Ill.: Arthur Bestor, Robert B. Crawford, Robert Haan, Robert McColley.

Indiana Univ.: Robert F. Byrnes, Charles Leonard Lundin, Rena L. Vassar, John E. Wiltz.

Univ. of Wisconsin: Eugene Boardman, Richard N. Current, Geo. L. Mosse.

Univ. of Mich.: John Bowditch, Alexander DeConde, Albert Feuerwerker, John Higham, Irving A. Leonard.

Northwestern.: Ray A. Billington.

Williams: Milton Cantor, John G. Sproat, Wm. R. Stanton, Robert G. W. Waite.

Smith: Lois Cohn-Haft, Leona C. Gabel, Eliz. Koffka, Ramon Eduardo Ruiz.

Goucher: Rhoda M. Dorsey, Geo. M. Foote, Wm. L. Neumann, Kenneth O. Walker.

Columbia: Robert D. Cross, Chas. B. Forcey, John A. Garraty, Wm. L. Leuchtenberg, Eric L. McKitrick.

New York University: Leo Gershoy, Henry H. B. Noss.

Rutgers: Traian Stoianovich, Warren I. Susman, Donald Weinstein, Henry R. Winkler.

Univ. of South Dakota: Cedric Cummins.

Pomona College: Margaret G. Davies, John H. Gleason, Vincent H. Learnihan, Burdette C. Poland.

San Francisco State College: James H. Stone, Theodore R. Treutlein, Gerald T. White.

Univ. of Toledo: Randolph C. Downes, Mikiso Hane, Arthur R. Steele.

Dominican College of San Rafael: Marshall Dill, Jr.

Bryn Mawr: Felix Gilbert.

Scripps College: Nikki Keddie.

Univ. of Arizona: Herman E. Bateman, James A. Beatson, Russell C. Ewing, Mario Rodriguez.

Claremont Graduate School: Douglass Adair, Hubert Herring, John Niven.

Sacramento State College: Edward D. Beechert, Jr., Gloria G. Cline, Robert Donaldson, Edward H. Howes, John Motlow.

Univ. of Penna.: Thos. C. Cochran, Richard S. Dunn, Holden Furber, Morton Keller, Arthur P. Whitaker.

Univ. of Minn.: T. A. Krueger, David Montgomery, Paul L. Murphy, David W. Noble, Stanley G. Payne, Howard Quint, Romeyn Taylor.

Univ. of Missouri: James L. Bugg, Jr., Allen F. Davis, R. M. Jones, Richard S. Kirkendall, R. E. McGrew, Chas. F. Mullett, W. V. Scholes,

Tulane Univ.: Mary B. Allen, Gerald M. Capers, Chas. Till Davis, Thos. L. Karnes.

Wesleyan Univ.: Loren Baritz, Samuel Hugh Brockunier, R. Kent Fielding, Wm. Kerr, David F. Trask.

Washington Univ. St. Louis: Peter T. Cominos, J. H. Dexter, Ralph E. Morrow, Peter Riesenberg.

Univ. of Washington: Gordon Griffiths, J. E. Van de Wetering.

Princeton: David D. Bien, Wm. B. Catton, Leonard Krieger, Stanley J. Stein.

Yale: John M. Blum, Robert S. Lopez.

Harvard: H. Stuart Hughes.

Cornell: David B. Davis, Edward W. Fox, Donald Kagan, Walter La Feber, Eugene F. Rice, Jr.

Carleton College: Carlton C. Qualey.

Vanderbilt: Alexander Marchant.

Haverford: Wallace T. McCaffrey.

Sacramento State College: Sam Ross.

Which Paper Do You Read—And Which Officials Do Its Reporters Talk To?

"The Cuban fiasco . . . has raised grave doubts in the Chief Executive's mind about top Pentagon military leaders. . . . The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Lyman L. Lemnitzer, and the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Arleigh Burke, gave the President a written signed opinion that the operation made sense militarily. It was this elaborate Pentagon approval, on top of the CIA's expressed expectations of a Cuban uprising, which apparently led the President to swallow whatever doubts he may have had. . . . Only two men raised objections to any important degree. One was the President's aide, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. . . . [the other] Senator J. William Fulbright."

—"Joint Chiefs in Doghouse Over Cuba," Chalmers M. Roberts in the Washington Post, May 14.

"It is now possible to report on high authority that Gen. Lyman L. Lemnitzer, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, wrote a letter to the President in which he objected strongly to the invasion plans. . . . In the military establishment it has been said that cautions on Cuba were overruled by the wishful thinking of intellectuals."

—"Hint Pentagon Tried to Stop Fiasco in Cuba", Walter Trohan, in the Chicago Tribune, same day.

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Three Items Which Show Us Less Concerned About Freedom in Washington Than in Cuba or Laos

We Only Seem to Be Vigilant About Dangers to Liberty Away From Home

For a country whose leaders sometimes seem to be itching to get into war somewhere—anywhere—in defense of freedom, we seem remarkably composed about possible dangers to the spirit of liberty at home. We cite a few items:

1. One of the marks of a country which is falling into totalitarian ways is that the secret police become sacrosanct. Here in Washington reporters are accustomed to ask impertinent questions of officials from the President down. But not a single newspaper has had the temerity to ask FBI Chief J. Edgar Hoover to comment on the verdict in the Meisenbach case. Mr. Hoover, as you recall, blamed the San Francisco student riots on a student who (he said) attacked an officer. This is also the version given by the Un-American Activities Committee narrator in "Operation Abolition." But when this student, Robert J. Meisenbach, was brought to trial the jury acquitted him. Meisenbach claimed it was the other way around—that the officer hit him. If it were any other public official than Mr. Hoover, the press would have been demanding that he explain.

A Bill to Reinstate an Iron Curtain of Our Own

2. One mark of a totalitarian society is that the government decides what you can read, and puts down an iron curtain particularly on publications from abroad. Two months ago President Kennedy, to his credit, stopped the practice by which our postal officials have been impounding foreign publications containing ideas they consider dangerous. Chairman Walter of House Un-Americans at once put in a bill (HR 5751) to reinstate this practice. Last Sunday the *Washington Post* (May 14) warned that the bill was on the consent calendar and might slip through the house Monday. It called for "a torrent of objections."

There was an objection, but it took the feeblest possible form. Had one member been bold enough to stand up and object, and then gotten two other members to object with him the next time the bill came up, it could have been knocked off the consent calendar altogether and sent back to wait its turn under normal procedures. Instead one member privately asked one of the official party objectors to have the bill passed over without prejudice. This prevented it from passing last Monday but leaves its status on the consent calendar unchanged. It may slip by next on Monday, May 29. Though Mr. Walter was setting himself up against the President, no one was ready to challenge him publicly.

3. Free societies jealous of their freedom are wary of peacetime sedition laws. The Smith Act was our first since the hated Alien and Sedition Acts of John Adams. In the *Yates* case, Mr. Justice Harlan reduced the number of possible prosecutions under the Act by strictly interpreting the word "organize." When a bill to widen the meaning of the term came up on the consent calendar earlier this session, Mr. James Roosevelt blocked passage by objecting. When it came up again the next Monday, Mr. Wm. Fitts Ryan of New York was intrepid enough to object but this time two more objectors were needed and none could be found so it passed on a voice vote, after a scant few minutes of discussion, with few members on the floor, as a routine measure.

Eternal vigilance, we used to be taught at school, is the price of liberty. But the only place we seem to be aroused about it is away from home.

Finest Straddle of the Year

"I do not join with any group, whether they be from the extreme left or extreme right, in their vicious personal attacks on either the members of the Supreme Court or the members of the Committee on Un-American Activities Committee."

—Congressman Chet Holifield (D. Cal.) responding to pressure from home that he "say something" about the House Un-American Activities Committee. From a speech on "The Communist Challenge to Democratic Procedures", an extension of remarks in the House May 15, in which, while declaring himself "still critical" of "some of the procedures of the Committee" but "aware of the need for investigation by a congressional committee of some type, into these movements of the extreme left or extreme right," he suggests "perhaps a subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee could be the answer to this problem. The term 'un-American' is too vague to lend itself to clarity of meaning."

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